

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1790

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUBUMBASHI 008

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINR, CG

SUBJECT: KATANGA GENDARMES, GIZENGA, AND INVASION THREAT

1. CONSULATE RECEIVED VISIT JANUARY 22 BY TSHOMBE KAVWIT (EX-THOMAS), YOUNGER BROTHER OF MOISE TSHOMBE AND OF CURRENT LUNDA PARAMOUNT CHIEF, FOR PURPOSE OF RELAYING TO USG HIS FEAR OF POTENTIAL ANGOLAN-ZAIRIAN BORDER VIOLENCE INVOLVING EX-KATANGA GENDARMES.

2. TSHOMBE RECEIVED ON JANUARY 20 LETTER FROM BRUSSELS FROM HIS NEPHEW JEAN TSHOMBE WHO REPORTS EXTENSIVE ACTIVITY IN BRUSSELS BY FORMER CONGOLESE POLITICAN GIZENGA. ACCORDING TO JEAN TSHOMBE, GIZENGA HAS SENT WELL-FINANCED REPRESENTATIVES TO BRUSSELS FOR PURPOSE OF CONTACTING EX-KATANGA GENDARMES IN ANGOLA. (CONTACT IMPLEMENTED BY INTERCHANGE OF ENVOYS FLYING BRUSSELS-LUANDA VIA SWEDEN AND PARIS) OBJECTIVE IS TO ORGANIZE GENDARME INVASION OF SHABA PROVINCE FROM TEIXIERA DE SOUSA ALONG LINE OF RAIL TO KOLWEZI.

3. TSHOMBE STATED HIS CONCERN ABOUT THIS REPORT FROM HIS NEPHEW AS HE FEELS HE AND HIS FAMILY ARE IN PERSONAL DANGER IF SUCH AN EVENT SHOULD OCCUR. HE CONSIDERS THREAT MEANINGFUL BASED ON (A) HIS PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF GENDARMES (SEE BELOW)
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(B) CONDITIONS IN SHABA AND ZAIRE WHICH HAVE CREATED PRO-MPLA

SYMPATHY AMONG GENERAL POPULATION AND (C) CURRENT DISPOSITION
OF GENDARMES ALONG ZAIRIAN BORDER (SEE BELOW).

4. IN MARCH 1975 TSHOMBE CLAIMS TO HAVE VISITED GENDARME
CAMP NEAR PORTUGALIA, ANGOLA AS PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE OF
PRESIDENT MOBUTU CHARGED WITH INVITING GENDARMES TO RETURN
TO ZAIRE. (AS MEMBER OF TSHOMBE FAMILY, HE WAS PICKED AS
CONCRETE EVIDENCE THAT EX-KATANGA PERSONALITIES COULD TRUST
PRESIDENT'S INTENTIONS.) GENDARME CHIEF REPLIED WITH CAUTIOUS
INTEREST BUT STATED THAT PREPARATIONS TO MOVE WOULD TAKE SOME
TIME. PRIOR TO COMPLETION OF THESE PREPARATIONS, ALLEGED
ABORTIVE COUP IN KINSHASA (JUNE 1975) OCCURRED AND GENDARMES
AND ZAIRIAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS BOTH TOOK FRIGHT AND
RAPPROCHEMENT FEEL THROUGH.

5. EX-KATANGA GENDARMES NUMBER APPROXIMATELY 4,300 PLUS
FAMILIES. COMMANDER IS ONE NATHANIEL MBUMB, (FORMERLY POLICE
CHIEF IN DILOLO WHO CROSSED BORDER IN 1967; METHODIST-EDUCATED
LUNDA; SENT TO LISBON BY PORTUGUESE FOR FORMAL MILITARY
TRAINING IN LATE 1960S). GENDARME FORCE CONSISTS OF FORMER
KATANGESE GENDARMES PLUS NUMBER OF RECRUITS ATTRACTED OVER
PAST YEARS. THEY WERE WELL-TRAINED, AND EQUIPPED WITH LIGHT
WEAPONS. TSHOMBE CLAIMS THAT APPROXIMATELY 400 WERE SENT
OUT OF ANGOLA IN JULY-NOVEMBER 1975 FOR SPECIAL COMMANDO
TRAINING. ALSO, IN LAST MONTHS OF YEAR THEY WERE ISSUED
HEAVY WEAPONS.

6. APPROXIMATELY ONE COMPANY OF GENDARMES ARE IN CABINDA
MAJOITY OF REST ARE STATIONED ALONG ANGOLA-SHABA BORDER
WITH MAJOR CONCENTRATION IN TEIXEIRA DE SOUSA. TSHOMBE
STATES THAT ONLY TROOPS ALONG BORDER BETWEEN TEIXEIRA DE
SOUSA AND PORTUGALIA ARE GENDARMES.

7. PUTTING ALL THIS INFORMATION TOGETHER, TSHOMBE EXPRESSED
REAL CONCERN OVER POSSIBILITY OF GENDARME INVASION OF SHABA
FROM ANGOLA PURPOSE, HE REPLIED TO QUESTIONS, WOULD NOT
BE TO RAISE OLD SECESSIONIST FLAG BUT TO INITIATE COUNTRY-
WIDE MOVEMENT TO REPLACE PRESENT REGIME. HE HIMSELF DID
NOT EXPRESS SYMPATHY WITH THIS POSSIBILITY BUT RATHER
CONCERN ABOUT ITS IMPLICATIONS.
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MARKS

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